How the Church Became an Assembly of Spectators

For many of us, the Church of Christ no longer serves the purpose given by God. It is easily observed how we have adopted the idea from each other that what is generically called "the Church" is the place where people with common religious concerns gather.

We have been taught to believe it is the place where we sing, pray, participate in a religious program, and socialize a bit after the program ends, then everyone goes back to their personal concerns and interests. Thus, for many, the Church has become just a place to find the peace of soul that is lost during the week due to a busy lifestyle.

The vast majority of members are in the position of being spectators at these religious programs, their service consisting of being present/sitting in the pew and contributing a certain amount of money for the needs of the assembly. A very small part of the members have the service of carrying out this program.

Thus, we have been convinced that, after being born again, God is somewhere far away and does not get too involved in human life. And this is where the majority of us remain. We went to church, had our seat, confessed our sins, were baptized, sang, supported the teachings of the church we belong to, being convinced that in this way we will enter the Kingdom of God.

So, in these assemblies, the ordinary member is a mere consumer;he has nothing to do, attending the assembly being his only duty. In most large assemblies, members only know each other by sight.

Because of these teachings, many of those on the membership list no longer come to these programs, the buildings being quite empty at certain worship services.

In many congregations, there is a significant difference between the membership list and those who actually attend worship programs. This has led us to believe that it is normal for a congregation to have many who do not participate in meetings for months or years and yet remain on the membership list.

What we see today almost everywhere shows that Satan has managed to distort the role of the Church, the significance of the Body of Christ. Through the false teaching that "salvation is just about the forgiveness of sins" (a teaching that underlies major religious organizations), he has deceived people into thinking that discipleship and the school of Christ are not necessary.

Most of us have been taught that God has done everything for us, that salvation, which consists of the forgiveness of sins, is obtained through faith in the sacrifice on the cross. We have been taught that it is not possible to achieve perfection of character, that no one can add anything to the work of salvation done on the cross.

This false teaching aimed to abolish discipleship and the importance of the school of Christ (the Church), deceiving people into thinking that these are not part of the plan of salvation. Satan has worked hard to obscure the role of the Body of Christ in the work of growing and perfecting the saints.

The doctrine that salvation is reduced to just the forgiveness of sins has led many to no longer value the Body of Christ. Those who have received this teaching have been blinded to the role of the Church and have failed to see the need for the Body of Christ and the members to be closely connected. This situation applies to both those who are on the membership list of a congregation that only focus on worship programs and those who have chosen to live their faith alone. (And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. (Ezekiel 34:5)

Both of these situations are very dangerous because they are actually a rejection of Christ's work regarding the growth/building of members in the Church/His Body. (He gave Himself for her, to sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:25-27; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Ephesians 2:21-22)

On the foundation of this false teaching, Satan has managed to deceive people into thinking that the "Church" is just about worship/preaching in buildings equipped with preaching halls that only provide religious education.

It is easy to see that this teaching has made discipleship to Christ non-existent in today's religious movements, and almost no one believes anymore that living as a disciple is necessary to reach the full stature of their Teacher.

Whoever wants to look more closely will be able to observe that Satan, like a great merchant, has made every effort to create a large religious empire to keep people in darkness, so that man does not know the truth about the Church of Christ.

Thus, he has positioned in every country, religious organizations (like supermarket chains) that offer man only religious programs and has managed to catch billions of

people in this trap. None of them has discipleship implemented in its doctrine, none of them aim to reach the stature of the fullness of Christ.

If we look at these religious movements, we easily see how well Satan has managed to deceive humanity, all practicing the institutionalized system of worship. From Catholics, Orthodox, Lutherans, to neo-Protestant movements, all follow the same pattern of organization, with buildings specially constructed for worship and preaching.

Thus, the Church has turned into a simple center of religious education, losing its true purpose and no longer represents the place intended for the growth and perfection of the saints, a place where dominions and powers admire the manifold wisdom of God made known through the Church. According to his eternal purpose that he established in Christ Jesus our Lord, as Ephesians 3:10-11 tells us.

Firstly, Satan worked on replacing the spiritual parents/shepherds, which are in charge of raising their children (disciples). These have been replaced with pastors/leaders in preaching, with ministers dedicated only to worship programs, who are in charge of only religious education and keeping the flock in a scattered form, not the growth of children. (The wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. John 10:12)

Thus, the one who wants to live the practical life of discipleship, which presupposes a child - parent relationship, will find themselves in the ridiculous situation of not finding any spiritual parent.

This happens because today, in these religious organizations, spiritual parents are completely missing, as was the apostle Paul for Timothy, Titus, Onesimus, as well as for many others, these being replaced with pastor-preachers, committee members, youth leaders... (see Paul's epistle to Timothy, Titus, Philemon)

For those who accept the pattern of the church with religious programs, the real Church, in which the members are closely connected to each other and which altogether form the Body of Christ, remains a great mystery. For those who stick to this pattern, the Church that is described in the Holy Scripture, has no practical applicability. (This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Ephesians 5:32)

The question we each need to ask ourselves is: What mystery does the Church hide? For whom is it a mystery? Is it for us too?

This post is an excerpt from the booklet "The Church – The Body of Christ", which you can read in full, free of charge. More studies and resources for spiritual awakening are available at

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